

February 4, 1999

In 1984, Father Skyles learned to speak and read Spanish to reach out to the Hispanic Community. Today, Father Skyles leads four services, including one in Spanish, each Sunday.

Father Skyles founded the North Pasadena Community Outreach Organization. In association with the Episcopal Health Charities and support from St. Peter's parishioners, the Community Outreach Center will house after school programs, a free community clinic, and a state of the art computer clubhouse. The Center, opened in January 1999, is a \$1 million investment in the well-being of Pasadena and is among the first church-school-community collaborations in this area.

Father Skyles was recognized as Pasadena's Citizen of the Year in 1973, awarded the Religious Service Award for the Greater Houston area, and appointed as Dean of the East Harris County Convocation of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas in 1993. He has also been a member of the National Conference of Christians and Jews since 1982.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Father Benjamin Skyles for his service to the Pasadena community. He is truly a man of social action. His deeds and contributions will not be forgotten.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO STOP FRANKING ABUSE

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 4, 1999

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, last year I introduced H.R. 642, a bill that ends the most pervasive abuse of the frank—sending out unsolicited, self-promotional mass mailings. Today, I am reintroducing this bill. My bill specifically targets franking abuse by cracking down on the use of mass mailings.

Title 39 of the U.S. Code defines the types of mailings that are frankable. Included in this definition are the "usual and customary" congressional newsletter, press release or questionnaire. The legislation I am reintroducing would simply strike mailings of this type from the code, thereby disallowing future use of the frank for these purposes.

Other franking reform proposals have centered around dangerous numbers games that leave open the possibility of abuse. Rather than try to settle on some arbitrary formula, my legislation will get to the heart of the problem. Reducing the definition of "mass" from 500 to 100, or debating whether the franking allowance should be reduced by 50% or 33% misses the mark. The problem that needs to be addressed is the use of the frank as a campaign tool whose real "informational" purpose is to make constituents aware of how deserving we are of reelection.

I urge all members who are interested in real campaign finance reform to carefully consider cosponsoring this bill.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMEMORATING THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF SRI LANKA'S INDEPENDENCE FEBRUARY 4, 1999

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 4, 1999

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the Honorable Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (President of Sri Lanka), her government, and the people of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, on the occasion of the 51st anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence.

Sri Lanka is a free, independent, and sovereign nation. This unique country has an extensive and rich history, dating back to its flourishing civilization of the 2nd century B.C. Throughout the years, Sri Lanka has developed its economy based on its agriculture, cultivation of semi-precious stones, and manufacturing industries.

Although Sri Lanka experienced invasions and rule by the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, Sri Lanka regained independence through a peaceful and constitutional process in 1948. After 51 years of independence, Sri Lanka has emerged as a key South Asian country committed to democracy, free market economics, and sound social and development policy.

Bi-lateral relations between the U.S. and Sri Lanka have always been strong. To date, Sri Lanka exports nearly \$1.5 billion worth of goods to the U.S. and the U.S. exports nearly \$370 million worth of goods to Sri Lanka. Trade and investment between the U.S. and Sri Lanka continue to grow, with some of the largest business links with Sri Lanka including companies such as Coca-Cola, Motorola, IBM and Hilton, to name a few.

The formation and development of the Congressional Caucus on Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan-Americans will lead to increased constructive and educated dialogue between the U.S. and Sri Lanka. This will ensure progress between the two countries and the opportunity for Congress to gain greater knowledge and education about Sri Lanka.

As Sri Lanka celebrates 51 years of freedom, this is a wonderful opportunity for us to pay tribute to all of her national heroes and freedom fighters who fought for independence. I am also happy to extend my congratulations to the approximately 100,000 Sri Lankans in the U.S., whose communities have made economic and social impacts throughout various cities across the U.S.

Sri Lanka's rich history of over 2500 years, and its tremendous progress as a nation in 51 years alone, proves Sri Lanka's strength and tremendous potential for the 21st century and years to come. Again, I join in commemoration of Sri Lanka's 51st year of independence and I look forward to working with the Congressional Caucus on Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan-Americans, the Sri Lankan community in the U.S., and the government of Sri Lanka.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO GOVERNOR
MEL CARNAHAN OF MISSOURI

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 4, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Governor Mel Carnahan of Missouri is one of five public leaders nationwide to receive an Americans for the Arts' Government Leadership in the Arts award.

Governor Carnahan received the 1999 Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors Award for State Arts Leadership. Governor Carnahan was recognized for his outstanding leadership in forging overwhelming bipartisan support of the arts, resulting in unprecedented cultural policy within the state of Missouri. He spearheaded and signed into law a provision designating 100 percent of an existing tax on non-resident athletes and entertainers to build a \$100 million state Cultural Trust over the next ten years. A portion of this designated revenue stream will also provide annual state budget increases for the arts. A number of other exemplary initiatives also characterize Governor Carnahan's leadership in the arts. Since taking office in 1993, Governor Carnahan steadily increased the annual appropriations for the arts in the state, ranking Missouri seventh nationally in per capita state funding for the arts. He established the Missouri Fine Arts Academy at Springfield, MO, providing 200 high school students each year the opportunity to participate in a three-week residence program to sharpen their artistic talents. His efforts also led to the statewide public school adoption of arts education as a part of their core curriculum.

Nominated by the Missouri Arts Council and Missouri Citizens for the Arts, Governor Carnahan was honored at the Mayor's Arts Gala at Washington, D.C., on January 28, 1999. The event was held in conjunction with the Conference of Mayor's Annual Meeting and the Urban Arts Foundation meeting, a gathering of more than 700 mayors and arts leaders from across the nation.

Governor Carnahan shares this honor with many key national figures including, Senator EDWARD KENNEDY, of Massachusetts; Representative MICHAEL CASTLE, of Delaware, Mayor Joseph Riley, of Charleston, S.C.; and Jane Alexander, former NEA Chairperson.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues will join me in congratulating Governor Carnahan, and join the Americans for the Arts in commending his good work.

IN HONOR OF MR. FRANK
AGUIRRE

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 4, 1999

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, it is with the utmost pleasure and privilege that I rise today to recognize a wonderful American, Mr. Frank Aguirre, for his inspiration as a dedicated father, a hard-working professional, and a model